

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT****DATE: 14 MARCH 2017****LEAD OFFICER: JULIE FISHER, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****SUBJECT: TO DETERMINE WHETHER TO PERMANENTLY EXPAND TOWN FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL IN STANWELL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The demand for primary school places in Stanwell has been on a slowly upward trajectory since 2011. Bulge classes have been added to Town Farm and Stanwell Fields schools three times in the past six years (four additional forms of entry in total).

Although the demand has not been consistent year on year, the forecast to 2025 indicates a need for at least 140 Reception places per year and the current combined Published Admission Number is only 120.

Stanwell village is on the extreme north eastern border of Surrey, adjacent to the London boroughs of Hillingdon and Hounslow. Public transport links to other Surrey schools are not easy, the nearest adjacent Surrey planning area being Ashford. People in Stanwell are therefore somewhat cut off from other options of Surrey primary schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement:

1. determine whether there is sufficient evidence to permanently expand Town Farm Primary School (a two form entry school with a PAN of 60) by one form of entry (new PAN of 90) in 2017/ 2018; and
2. subject to the approval of Recommendation 1 note the proposed solution for adding accommodation to the school and anticipate the Cabinet report seeking the release of funding for the scheme.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The most recent forecast of pupil numbers indicates a need for one more form of entry in Stanwell. This forecast is based on the local birth rate, the housing trajectory and a three year trend of admissions both in and out of the area.
2. The pattern and trends of admissions in this area make the forecast methodology less secure than in other parts of the borough because the forecast is affected by the number of pupils in the neighbouring London boroughs that apply for, and obtain a school place in Surrey. This has varied from year to year depending on parental preference for certain schools and the availability of places in Hounslow

and Hillingdon.

3. The most recent bulge class was added to Town Farm in September 2016. Creating 90 Reception places in this school; the cohort actually admitted was 80 pupils at the last school census, leaving ten Reception vacancies at Town Farm and a further three vacancies at Stanwell Fields. The total Reception cohort being 137 against a combined Published Admission Number (PAN) of 120. The forecast for 2016 was 132.
4. It was anticipated that another bulge class may be needed in September 2017 but the admissions applications do not currently support this, although this is an area where historically we have received a number of late applications.
5. It is therefore recommended that The Cabinet Member considers the data and local context set out in more detail below and determines whether it is the right time to expand Town Farm Primary school.
6. If the decision is taken to expand Town Farm permanently then the school will require a building programme to add four more classrooms. The school already has three spare classrooms that are currently being used to accommodate previous bulge classes. There is money allocated in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for this project.

<u>DETAILS:</u>

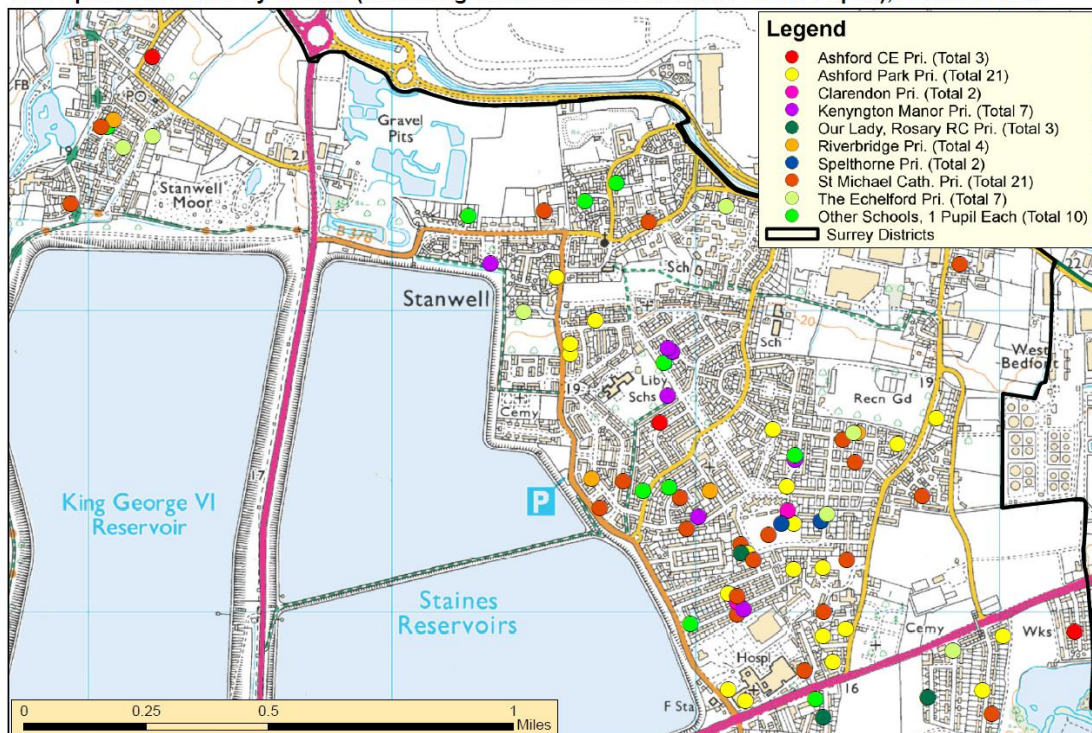
Business Case

7. There are only two schools in the Stanwell Planning Area: Town Farm and Stanwell Fields. The latter is a Voluntary Aided school in the Anglican diocese of Westminster and is situated within the Green Belt; it is therefore not an option to expand this school.
8. Both schools currently have a PAN of 60, making a combined PAN of 120. Town Farm admitted a bulge class in September 2016 to meet the local demand for Reception places and comply with the legal requirement that infants should not be taught in classes of more than 30 pupils.
9. The forecast data for the Stanwell primary planning area is set out below. The second column shows the forecast Reception class demand and should be compared to the current PAN of 120. The subsequent columns refer to the other year groups (Y1-6); the final three columns are the total of Key Stage 1 and 2 students and the total predicted number on roll.

Academic Year	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	KS1 Infant Yrs R-2	KS2 Junior Yrs 3-6	Total Yrs R-6	Capacity
2013-14	179	113	138	118	106	109	105	430	438	868	
2014-15	118	172	104	134	104	108	101	394	447	841	
2015-16	118	115	171	104	134	104	103	404	445	849	
2016-17	132	115	112	175	101	131	101	359	508	867	
2017-18	143	129	113	117	172	98	129	385	516	901	
2018-19	140	140	126	117	114	169	96	406	496	902	
2019-20	139	137	137	130	114	111	166	413	521	934	
2020-21	144	137	134	141	128	111	108	415	488	903	
2021-22	146	141	134	139	139	125	109	421	512	933	
2022-23	149	144	139	139	136	136	122	432	533	965	
2023-24	149	147	142	143	136	133	133	438	545	983	
2024-25	148	146	144	146	141	134	131	438	552	990	
2025-26	148	146	143	148	143	138	131	437	560	997	

10. It is evident that there has been a fall in pupil numbers entering school between 2013 and 2016 but there are still insufficient places in the planning area to meet the future demand.
11. The actual number of 'on time', first preferences received for September 2017 admission is 112 but six late applications are already known about and this is an area where a number of late and in year admissions have historically been received. There have been only two 'out of county' applications for Stanwell schools in the current admissions round. So although there are 25 fewer applications than the forecast to date it is expected that this number will rise and be very close to the forecast by September 2017.
12. It is apparent that there have been some larger cohorts moving through the area; for example the current Year 3 is 168 (as opposed to 175 shown in the forecast). And the current Year 5 is 131. All other year groups are within the combined PAN of 120.
13. The forecast indicates that future demand is likely to exceed the 120 places. Furthermore when we consider the map below, showing 2016 Stanwell resident Reception pupils being educated in schools outside of Stanwell village it is evident that there are a greater number of children requiring school places than are actually being taught in Stanwell schools.

YR Pupils in Stanwell by School (excluding Town Farm and Stanwell Fields Pupils), Autumn 2016



14. In order to meet the demand for school places there are normally three options: to add a bulge class in the area, to allocate to vacancies in an adjacent area or to permanently expand a school. So far the Council has resorted to bulge classes in both Stanwell schools but this is now proving to be difficult and expensive and is a piecemeal approach to the problem.
15. When looking at availability of school places in adjacent areas there is a limited opportunity for placing Stanwell children in these schools and journeys out of the village with very young children are not always a viable option for parents. It should be noted that infant aged pupils are not legally supposed to be taught in classes of over 30 children.

Staines area	Combined PAN	Forecast demand	Shortfall/surplus
2017	240	272	- 32
2018	240	241	- 1
2019	240	236	+ 4
2020	240	239	+ 1
2021	240	242	- 2
2022	240	245	- 5
2023	240	244	- 4

Ashford area	Combined PAN	Forecast demand	Shortfall/surplus
2017	480	493	- 13
2018	480	470	+ 10
2019	480	457	+23
2020	480	469	+ 11
2021	480	478	+ 2
2022	480	487	- 7
2023	480	486	- 6

CONSULTATION:

16. A public consultation was carried out between Friday 6 January 2016 and Friday 3 February 2017. (This was 21 working days or 4 full weeks.) The Statutory Notice of consultation was also published at the time. A consultation document was produced and circulated to all parents and other stakeholders and interested parties. In addition, two meetings were held at the school on Tuesday 24 January and Wednesday 25 January; these were attended by approximately 16 people. This was a disappointingly low attendance considering the size of the school (533 pupils) and the various stakeholder groups that were contacted. Nevertheless a number of issues were raised within the consultation forum and these and the consultation responses received are summarised below:

17. A total of two written responses were received via the Surrey Says website; no other consultation forms were received by other methods. One response from a local resident who was not in favour of expansion sets out a number of questions and concerns (set out verbatim below) which the Governing Body will reflect upon and possibly respond to via the school's newsletter:

a. Worried about the overall impact of the school. As Town Farm sits on the edge of North Surrey, will they struggle to attract and retain experienced teachers as only a mile or two away other schools salaries include London weighting.

b. Will this interfere with working towards achieving an outstanding OFSTED inspection? More children stretches resources.

c. *Will daily life at school be uninterrupted, e.g. lunch times, play times etc? Will more children mean less time to eat in order to turnaround lunchtime? Will more staff be required to supervise lunchtimes?*

d. *Will school trips continue or be cancelled due to volume of children? Will there be issues where there is not enough staff to accompany trips/excursions? Also will the percentage of children on pupil premium affect the schools contribution to funding trips and therefore may be cancelled?*

e. *How will school productions be organised? The stage is packed out enough now with the amount of children currently at school.*

18. The second written response was from a member of staff who was in support of the expansion and commented "I hope that staffing will be addressed to consider the increase in pupils and the maintenance needs of the expanded site."

19. The Local Authority also received some private emails from three local Headteachers of primary schools in the Stanwell and Ashford planning areas. They each questioned the necessity for the expansion and asked for further clarification of the forecast data and evidence of the justification for the proposed expansion. Detailed individual responses were provided by the School Commissioning Officer and no further responses have been received indicating either agreement or objection to the proposal.

20. Hounslow Local Authority also responded indicating a concern that there could be surplus places across the two boroughs as Hounslow is anticipating having surplus places. The response is copied below:

Following our recent meeting, we took an opportunity to review again our Feltham & Hanworth planning area, and in fact for Sept 2017 we will be reducing one form of entry in this area. From 2018 through 2023 our projections currently are showing that we would expect to see a continued level of surplus of just over 2 forms of entry. In addition, we are aware that an all-through 2FE free school which has been approved, but start date not yet confirmed, would add further surplus in the Feltham area. We would be concerned that any increase in capacity from Spelthorne or Richmond, where this planning area borders, may have a detrimental effect on local schools managing their numbers.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

21. It is therefore fair to summarise that there has been a low response rate to this consultation proposal, with the main concerns being surplus school places across the borough and in a neighbouring Local Authority area, and a few operational issues relating to the provision for pupils and management of a larger school by the leadership and governors.

22. From the extremely low response rate and attendance at the two meetings it is possible to assume that there is no strong objection to this proposal from parents, staff or residents. However, other stakeholders are clearly concerned that the pupil forecast data is accurate and expansion at the school is necessary.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

23. The key risk to this proposal is the dependency on a successful planning application to develop the site. The school is currently a recipient of the Priority Schools Building Programme 2 scheme whereby the Department for Education has undertaken to refurbish the electrical and mechanical infrastructure of Town Farm primary school to make the building fit for purpose for the foreseeable future. There is a risk that the two schemes could overlap and there would be two or more sets of contractors on site at the same time.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

24. The cost of the 2013/18 Capital Programme has been approved by Cabinet and includes this scheme. It therefore has approved funding in the 2013/18 MTFP. More detailed estimated costings will be provided as the scheme progresses and the business case will be approved by Investment Panel.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

25. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 contain the regulations that apply to prescribed alterations. The DCSF has published two pieces of Guidance relating to prescribed alterations: Expanding a Maintained Mainstream School or Adding a Sixth Form and Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School (Other than Expansion). These contain both statutory guidance (i.e. guidance to which proposers and decision makers have a statutory duty to have regard) and non-statutory guidance on the process for making changes to school provision. This guidance has been followed.

Equalities and Diversity

26. There are no direct equalities implications arising out of the proposal. The increased provision will be open to all applicants irrespective of race, gender, faith, ethnicity or ability. The admissions arrangements will give the highest priority to Looked After Children and pupils on the Special Educational Needs register and/or those who would benefit from a statement of educational need, thus supporting provision for our most vulnerable children. Children with siblings will receive the next priority, followed by those children living closest to the school. There is no proposal to amend the admissions criteria.

27. The potential implications for the following Council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No specific implications arising from this report other than the general admissions policy noted above.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	See below
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report
Climate change	<i>See below</i>
Carbon emissions	See below

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

28. The school has a robust Safeguarding Policy which is monitored by the designated Child Protection Lead Officer, is regularly reviewed by the governing body and is subject to OFSTED inspection. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, have been considered and addressed in the planning and design of this building project. Consultation responses will be taken into account when the final design is submitted.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

29. The County Council attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change. A safe walking route to the new site school has been identified for use by children and families. In addition, the design for the new school will include facilities on campus to encourage children to cycle or use scooters to get to school.

30. The additional school provision is centred close to the demographic demand and as a result will enable parents and children to attend a local school and thus should reduce either the need for, or length of school journeys.

31. The design of the new school is energy efficient and follows all local guidance and standards in this respect.

Section 151 Commentary

32. There is approved funding for this scheme in the current 2013/18 MTFP. More detailed costings will be compiled for the business case and Investment Panel approval.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- Subject to Cabinet Member approval, Statutory Notices stating the Council's intent to rebuild and expand the school will be published. The Cabinet Member will then receive a further report to determine the proposal within two months of the expiration of the Statutory Notices.
- The outcome of this consultation will be published on the Surrey County Council website and parents of pupils at the school will be notified by letter from the Governing Body.

Contact Officer:

Melanie Harris

School Commissioning Officer NE Surrey tel. 020 8541 9556

Consulted:

Parents of pupils and prospective pupils of Town Farm Primary School

Local Councillors

Annexes: none

Sources/background papers:

School Organisation Consultation Proposal

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